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REVIEWS.

SELECTIONS ON CONTRACTS. By William A. Keener, Professor of Law and Dean of the Faculty of Law in Columbia College. Two vols., pp. 1222. Baker, Voorhis, & Co., New York. Price, \$12.

This book is intended primarily for the use of first-year students in the Columbia Law School. It consists of a collection of well-known English and American cases, taken from Finch's "Cases on Contracts," with very liberal slices from Mr. Leake's treatise on Contracts sandwiched in between. The editor thus brings together in one book the text of a standard treatise and the cases on which the text is founded. This plan is adopted in aid of the method of instruction now used at Columbia. Whether this method will enable the student to acquire an equal knowledge of the law with the expenditure of a smaller amount of time and energy, or will prevent him from acquiring the independent habit of thought and firm grasp of principles which comes from grappling single-handed with the difficulties which beset the beginner in the study of cases, can be learned only from experience. In the opinion of those who have been trained under the case system pure and simple, one of its chief merits is that it gives the student a power to extract with confidence the *ratio decidendi* of any case, and to compare it intelligently with other cases on the same subject; to ascertain for himself the principles on which it was decided, and see the considerations which influenced the court in reaching its decision. Whether the Columbia method is so well adapted to this end as is the Harvard method remains to be seen. It may well be that a difference in the existing circumstances of the two schools may render a slightly different system desirable. It is not, however, our purpose to discuss the Columbia method, except in so far as it is involved in the plan of this book.

The reprint in this form of a leading text-book would seem to be no great gain to the educational literature of the law. The exigencies of the Columbia method may, however, require it. One obvious disadvantage of the plan is that it requires the books to be of an inconvenient size. In appearance and make-up it is inferior to Professor Keener's collection of cases on Quasi-contracts.

The selections are not confined to the essential elements of the simple contract merely, but cover nearly the whole field dealt with by the ordinary text-books.

THE AMERICAN DIGEST: Annual, 1891: Also the Complete Digest for 1891. Prepared and edited by the editorial staff of the National Reporter System. St. Paul, Minn.: West Publishing Company, 1891. Pages 5103.

The digest is modelled on the same plan as that adopted last year. It is somewhat larger, covering the twelve months from September 1, 1890, to August 31, 1891. In form it presents no new features. The completeness of this Digest is its greatest merit, and its success during the past year proves the wisdom of consolidating and bringing all the cases into one volume.

LAWYERS' REPORTS, ANNOTATED. Book XII. Robert Desty, editor. The Lawyers' Coöperative Publishing Company, Rochester, N. Y., 1891. Pages 911.

This volume contains a selection of recent cases of general importance decided in the various state and territorial courts. The book is something upon the plan of a collection of leading cases. Notes of various lengths are appended to the cases, containing brief statements of existing law upon the topics touched upon by the decisions. An index of subjects treated by the notes and cases is appended. It is not entirely clear just for what use the book is intended; it certainly cannot take the place of the regular reports. It is of interest, however, as showing some new points of law recently decided.

GENERAL DIGEST OF THE DECISIONS OF THE PRINCIPAL COURTS IN THE UNITED STATES, ENGLAND, AND CANADA. Published by the Lawyers' Coöperative Publishing Company, Rochester, N. Y., 1891. Pages 2231.

The sixth volume in this series of annual digests covers the year ending in September, 1891. It contains 18,000 cases digested in 36,000 paragraphs. Each paragraph is intended to contain a distinct point of law, and needless repetition has been avoided by combining cases involving identical points into the same paragraphs. Citations are given from many unofficial reports, as well as from the official reports. All the regular English reports and the decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada are digested. A most important requisite of a good digest is proper and complete classification, and logical and orderly arrangement of heads and sub-heads. The publishers claim to have paid particular attention to these matters. Such a work is an excellent antidote to protect one from the depressing effect of eighteen thousand reported cases in the year just past.

LEADING ARTICLES IN EXCHANGES.

The Green Bag. Vol. IV.

No. 1. Caleb Cushing (with portrait); Legal Emergencies; Supreme Court of Georgia; Ancient Jewish Law.

Washington Law Reporter. Vol. XX.

No. 1. Damages for Refusal to Cash Check.

No. 3. Law Reform; A Sur-Rejoinder.

New Jersey Law Journal. Vol. XV.

No. 1. Children playing on Railroad Turn-table.

Irish Law Times. Vol. XXV.

No. 1299. Collusive Compromises.

No. 1300. Defamation in Course of Judicial Proceedings.

No. 1301. "Effects" and "Other Effects" in Wills.

No. 1302. } Interest on Tradesmen's Effects.

No. 1303. }

The Law Journal. London. Vol. XXVI. and Vol. XXVII.

No. 1354. A Desk and its Contents.

No. 1357. Law of Inebriety.

Albany Law Journal. Vol. XLV.

No. 1. Pardon before "Conviction."

No. 2. Maybrick Case.

Central Law Journal. Vol. XXXIV.

No. 1. Sufficiency of the Memorandum under the Statute of Frauds.

No. 2. Partnership Liability of Stockholders.

No. 4. Guardian and Ward.